

COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

VOL. XVII. No. 5.] LONDON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1810. [Price 1s.

"Farthermore, they have laid us open to all our enemies; whoever will invade, may not doubt to subdue us: for they have taken from us the sinews of war, that is *Money and Courage*; all our money is gone, and they have exhausted the treasure of the nation; and *when people are poor, their spirits are low*, so that we are left without a defence; and who must we thank for bringing us into this despicable condition, but these gentlemen, who, notwithstanding this, *had the face to stile themselves the KING'S FRIENDS*, and all those who opposed their practices were FACTIOUS and SEDITIOUS. They had brought it to that pass that whensoever any gentleman that had a true English spirit happened to say any thing that was bold, presently away to seek the king and tell him of it; and oftentimes more than the truth: and thus they endeavour to beget *an ill opinion in the king of his best subjects*: and their practice was the more abominable, because their words and actions gave the occasion to force those smart expressions from the gentlemen that spoke them; for their honest hearts were fired with true zeal to their king and country, when they beheld *the impudence and falseness of those Pensioners*. * * * * * Kings that dote too much upon their Favourites, do for the most part pick up MEAN MEN, people of no fortunes or estates, upon whom it is that they place their favour to so high a degree; and, therefore, it is for *their interest* to advise the king to govern by an Army, for if he prevails, then they are sure to have what heart can wish; or if he fail, yet they are but where they were: they had nothing, and they can lose nothing."—Mr. BOOTH'S Speeches, in the House of Commons, in the reign of Charles II. and in 1680. See Parliamentary History; Vol. IV. pages 1268 and 1272.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS.—I.

Opening of the Session: II. Lord Porchester's Motion for Inquiry: III. Lord Cockburn's Motion about Lord Gambier's Court-Martial: IV. Mr. Manning's Complaint against the News-papers.—I. The Opening of the Session was noticed in my last, at page 104, and the King's Speech was inserted at page 113. For the sake of having a more clear view of what has passed, or, at least, of what had passed up to Monday night, the 29th of January, I will here just restate, that, upon the question of the Amendment, which was moved on the first day of the Session, the ministers had, in the House of Lords, 144 votes against 92; and that, in the House of Commons, they had 263 against 167. The Amendment, as will be seen by a reference to it, contained a *censure* upon the conduct of the ministers, and also a declaration, that *inquiry* was necessary. How any man, at all informed of what had taken place in Spain and in Walcheren, could, for one single moment, hesitate as to whether the conduct of the ministers merited censure, is, to me, utterly incomprehensible. Yet, many there were who would not, as they said, censure without inquiry!—II. Well, they were soon put to the test upon this point; for, on Friday, the 26th, came LORD PORCHESTER with a motion for "the House going into a committee to take into consideration the policy and conduct of the Expedition to

"Walcheren." The speech, by which this motion was prefaced was, it appears, greatly applauded: but, not beyond its deserts; for there has seldom appeared, in a news-paper report, a speech so eloquent as this, and, at the same time, so replete with clear and forcible statement, correct reasoning, and good sentiment. There wanted, indeed, nothing at all to be said upon the subject; for, who could say, that inquiry ought not to take place? Aye; but there might be many, who, under pretence of *not pre-judging*, would endeavour to get rid of inquiry altogether.—The motion of LORD PORCHESTER was seconded by the Hon. MR. QUIN. The task of opposing this motion was, it seems, allotted to a Mr. CROKER, a briefless lawyer from Ireland, who, as the reader may recollect, cut a conspicuous figure during the Ducal Investigation, and who is now SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY, with a salary of 4,000*l.* a year. This Mr. Croker opposed the motion of Lord Porchester by another motion for the *previous question*, which, as the reader very well knows, amounts to just the same thing as a direct negative to the proposition, to which it is opposed. This Mr. Croker does not appear to me to have given any reason, worth a moment's attention, for this motion of his; but, he concluded with a pretty broad hint about the king, which it is quite proper to bear in mind, especially considering the quarter whence it came.—He asked the House, the newspapers tell us, "Whether it was dealing fairly and respectfully by his Majesty to

"vote for inquiry, when he had assured them, that *satisfactory* documents should be laid before them." The House does seem to have kicked a little at this. This, from Mr. Croker, does seem to have been going a little too far even for the House; and the thing was, by Mr. BRAGGE, resented pretty sharply. He gave it as his opinion, that, notwithstanding the lively spirit of Mr. Croker, the ministers had evinced no great sagacity in putting him forward as a spokesman, upon this occasion; and he deprecated in strong terms the use which this Mr. Croker had made of *the king's name*.—But, come, let us not be too severe upon this Mr. Croker's doctrine; for, I think, we must allow, that, for many years past, a pretty free use has been made of the king's name, both in the House and out of it. We must all remember, that, no longer ago than last winter, Mr. Canning not only made a similar use of the king's name, in the case of the Duke of York, but that he pushed forward the *age* and the *infirmities* of the king to boot; and this, too, without exciting any great degree of indignation in the House.—The truth is, I dare say, that this Mr. Croker had a desire to evince his friendship for his dearly beloved sovereign. And, really, when one considers the matter rightly, it would be hard to prevent him from shewing this ardent attachment of his. He is young, too, in all probability, and we know, that, at that time of life, the feelings of affection, as well as all other feelings, are stronger than at a more advanced age. I dare say, that, anon, his love for the king, though not at all diminished, will become more subservient to reason; but, at present, I must confess, that I do not think this ebullition of loyal affection a thing to be so much found fault of, especially as the person, in whose heart it seems to reign, appears to have been formed by nature for the entertaining of this particular attachment.—Mr. PERCEVAL seconded the motion of this Mr. Croker. This speech, as coming from the person who is prime minister, is of consequence, and, therefore, I shall insert all of it that is material, in the least degree, as an answer to Lord Porchester, or rather, as to why the motion for a committee of inquiry should not be adopted.—The pretence was, that the king had, in the Speech, ordered the House to be assured, that he would cause *papers*, relative to the Expedition, to be laid before them; and that as these papers would

be ready for delivery by Tuesday next, he would ask, why should they now appoint a Committee to inquire, destitute as they were of all information, when his majesty, in his speech, had so soon promised them information, which, he trusted, would be satisfactory. What was the object of Inquiry? Why, of course, to get information; and this information they were certainly promised. There was, of course, no necessity for the motion, if that, indeed, was its object, but they wanted to get the vote first. The only object of the vote could be to get information; and was it not then superfluous, when his majesty's government had advised his majesty to proffer that information, on which only an Inquiry could be founded?—It might be that this information should not be deemed sufficient; but why not wait to see? Where could be the mighty difference between Saturday and Monday? This, however, would be quite inconsistent; it would be too deliberative for the hon. gentlemen opposite. Oh, no, say they, we will wait for no information; it is unnecessary to us: we will enquire first, and get information afterwards. One hon. gentleman, however, feared when the papers did arrive they would not be found satisfactory; if so, why then papers more so might be moved for, but how could the question be affected by waiting to see; what could the loss of a day or few hours signify? Another hon. gentleman had spoken of *Parliamentary tactics*; indeed it was a science, in which they seemed miserably deficient; they had terribly mismanaged their manoeuvres on the first night of the session. If they were wise, they would have proposed the Motion of this night as an Amendment to the motion for the Address, in place of pre-judging the question as they did, and now moving for an Inquiry into it (*Hear, hear!*) But that would not do: no; they were more confident: they would bear down all precedent; they would shew their strength, and carry a motion such as had never been made before! (*Hear, hear!*) Perhaps, gentlemen opposite might say, there never before was such an occasion. (*Loud cheers from the opposition.*) Even if there was not, it still became any assembly which wished to carry even a shew of justice, to deliberate before they decided; to inquire before they condemned. (*Hear!*)

“They could never adopt the course of the gentlemen opposite; condemn first and try afterwards. They were at variance to-night with their first night’s proceedings; then they came with a sweeping, prejudging condemnation; now they tacitly acknowledged that they were then wrong, and made a motion to enquire. They were equally wrong in both cases, because, in the first case, they condemned without enquiry, and in the second they enquired without information (*hear, hear!*). It was a curious kind of justice; a *castigat aditque* species of proceeding which he hoped no British House of Commons ever would adopt. But justice was not the object; at least, it was only a nominal object: the real object, that for which every nerve was strained, and every shew even of common decency cast aside, *was the removal of Ministers*. On such an occasion it would be idle to condescend to forms; it would be unnecessary to attend to regular modes of proceeding; inquiry would be orderly, and therefore it should not be adopted; no, every thing but the plain object of interest was to be overleaped, and the grand point of removal and condemnation carried by storm. Down they came to the house for the purpose, full charge; nothing could withstand their self-supposed strength; numbers, popularity, confidence, weakness of the ministry, all gave them assurance of success. Alas! what a sad disappointment! totally discomfited; there never, he believed, was a more dispirited set of men; the house had shewn them their mistake; their woeful error! It had let them see pretty plainly that *it would not be led or hood-winked*. They had at length fatally discovered that the House of Commons of England would not pledge itself to enquire until it saw whether enquiry was necessary. He hoped it never would be so unjust or so inconsistent. All that ministers could do they had done; they had proffered papers which, in their opinion, would be sufficient to throw ample light upon the subject. It was to be seen whether they were mistaken or not in their conjecture as to the importance of those papers; whether they would be sufficiently explanatory, and, if not, what points they left undetermined. Then would be the time to demand more, until even the most sceptical were satisfied; what more ministers should have done,

“he could not see.”—Demand more papers: Aye, we all remember what *demanding papers* produced in the case of Lord Wellesley. Yes, yes; demanding papers is the effectual way, and the *only* effectual way, of *totally* defeating all inquiry. Papers, indeed! What papers are wanted to make out to us the truth of Lord Porchester’s charge, “that the flower of our army had been sent to perish in the charnel-houses of Walcheren; that the ministers had shamefully wasted the means of the country; that they had killed the hope of our allies; that they had, by this expedition, made this kingdom the laughing stock of Europe; and that, as our enemies had declared, the expeditions of our ministers, were advantages only to France.” Is there a man in all England, who has the smallest doubt upon this subject? Is there one single man, who wants papers of any sort to convince him of the truth of these propositions? Why, then, was the House to wait for papers?—The truth evidently enough is, that the very promise of papers, in the Speech, was intended to prevent an inquiry at the Bar of the House. If the papers had been waited for, then a discussion would have taken place upon them. More would have been moved for by the ministers themselves, if nobody else would have moved for them; thus the thing would have drawled out; and, at last, the decision would have been grounded upon *what*? Why, upon just such evidence as the *ministers chose to lay before the House*.—Papers, such as those which the ministers mean to lay before the house, may be necessary, during an inquiry; but, to hold them out as something to prevent the adoption of Lord Porchester’s motion, did certainly require more confidence than any man but Mr. Perceval could be expected to possess. The House agrees, that there have dreadful evils arisen, since it last met. Let us, then, says one of its members, inquire into the conduct of those, who have had the management of the nation’s affairs since that time, the ministers. Oh, no! say the ministers, don’t do that; stop till we lay *our story* before you; and, then you will see *whether there be ground for inquiry or not*. Was there any thing but this wanting to complete the series of insults, which this nation has been compelled to endure, or, at least, has endured, for these two years past? What! the *parties accused* say to their accusers: stay, do not institute an inquiry, till you have read *our papers*;

because those papers may convince you, that no inquiry is necessary! Never was there in this world any thing so coolly impudent as this. These accused persons would be a pretty set of fellows indeed, if they were to produce any papers, tending to shew their own guilt! It is not *their* papers, that the public want: the public want an investigation at the Bar of the House of Commons, and an examination of evidence of all sorts, and from all quarters; and it wants to see, that, in consequence of such an examination, something like *justice* shall be done, and something like *satisfaction* given to the public; something that may operate in the way of *security for the future*.—The rest of Mr. Perceval's speech was in the old way of *wrangling for place*; and, quite consolatory it must be to this abused nation, to hear what it heard from him in this speech. Oh! Napoleon! thine is indeed a lucky star! Never couldst thou, even in thy most sanguine moments, have dreamed, that England would have been in her present plight!—And, so, this little gentleman, when a motion is made for inquiry into the conduct of himself and his colleagues, in expending several millions of money for the *blowing up of a basin*, at which the enemy laughs, and in sending so many thousands of fine men, as Mr. Windham said, "to their grave, to be extinguished amidst the miasmata of Walcheren, to go out like a candle in a vault;" when a motion is made for inquiry as to such a matter, he, the king's head minister, banters his opponents upon their failure in what he calls their "*parliamentary tactics*," and runs on for half an hour in a gleeful strain about *majorities of votes in that House*.—Mr. TIERNEY, in answer to the speech of Mr. Perceval, observed "upon the manner in which the right hon. gentleman had treated the two propositions that had come from that side of the House. The right hon. gentleman had said a great deal of their confidence in their own strength, and of their disappointment on the first night, but he believed that the surprise was with the right hon. gentleman, at finding himself not in a minority, and the effects of that surprise had appeared in the altered manner of the right hon. gentleman since. He was now upon his stilts, self assured, and quite changed from that humble and subdued tone, in which he had on the first night thrown himself upon the house, and told them, that he

"must stand by his Sovereign, but now he called upon the house to stand by him. One gentleman under the gallery, in dealing out his compliments on the present administration, had forgot that he was applying to what *is*, the encomiums he had intended for what *had been*. The noble lord alluded to was no longer at the head of the War-department; and notwithstanding that versatile variety of powers that had enabled lord Liverpool to take the circuit of all the different offices of the State, yet it remained to be proved that he was as efficient for his present situation as his predecessor. The case of Buenos Ayres that had been cited was not in point, for there had been inquiry; and the unfortunate Officer who had had the command of that expedition had been broke. It had been said that the public, notwithstanding the nature of the previous question, might form wrong notions of it. The public do not technically understand it, but practically they understood it as well as they did, and would think it a trick to defeat inquiry. There was no need of further inquiry before the present motion—the calamity was notorious. If he see a man dead with twenty gashes in his head, and that when it was proposed that they go before the Coroner (just what was proposed in the present case), some one should object, No, no, never mind the Coroner—but here is a Gentleman who will tell us his story about it—aye—but he may be the murderer himself (*a laugh*). With respect to the promise of inquiry in his majesty's Speech, it was all very good, and he had great respect for it, and so forth, only he did not believe one syllable of it—that was all—(*a laugh*)—for the House would remember that they had promises of a similar nature; nay, much stronger; and they all knew what became of them. It was not papers he wanted, but *viva voce* evidence at the bar of that House—nothing else would do. No gentleman had the boldness to speak of a *Select Committee*, or even a *Private Committee*—it must be a Committee of the whole House. It had been said that the object of this motion is to turn out the present Ministers, and it is whimsical enough too, that the right hon. gentleman himself gravely states this as an objection to the motion, as if even if that event should take place it would be so deplorable a catastrophe. He (Mr. T.) openly avowed he wished to

“get them out, and he sincerely wished that the present motion might be attended with that desirable effect. He concluded with stating it as his opinion, that *the confidence of the country in that House was shaken*, and that it did seriously behove the house upon that occasion to endeavour to retrieve it. He did not blame a Noble Lord (Castlereagh) and a right hon. Gentleman (Canning) for the silence observed by them—but he confessed himself anxious to know whether they would oppose the original motion for inquiry.”—LORD CASTLEREAGH did vote for the inquiry; but, MR. CANNING voted against it; and, in this respect, as in most others, since they have been out of office, their conduct does present a very striking contrast.—SIR SAMUEL ROMILLY, in a most admirable speech, supported the motion. “Why,” said he, “should the minister reject inquiry, if he be so confident of the wisdom of the expedition? What are we to think of ministers, who are for staving off inquiry upon such grounds?” He solemnly declared, that the house was now upon its trial before the country; and he expressed his astonishment, that there should be persons to support the present minister, upon the ground of his being the *king’s defender*.—This is, to be sure, a very rich topic. Mr. Perceval said, during the first night’s debate, that Lords Grenville and Grey having refused to come into his views, and to make part of a ministry along with him, he felt it to be his duty to *stand by his sovereign*; and, Mr. Charles Yorke said, that he supported him, because he had *stood by his sovereign*.—These are pretty significant words, and words that one might have expected not to hear made use of towards a king, in honour of whom Mr. Yorke told us (in answer to Sir Francis Burdett) that *every heart in the country rejoiced on the day of the Jubilee*. Now, to *stand by* a person means, not only that such person is, in some measure, sustained by you, but that he is *attacked*, or, at least, that he is likely to be attacked in some way or other, and that, too, by assailants, whom if *left to himself*, he would be *unable to resist*. Without the existence, or assumed existence, of these circumstances, to talk of *standing by* a person is downright nonsense, and especially to take merit to yourself for such *standing by*.—Well, then, is it already come to this, that the king, in honour of whom the Jubilee was held, is in such a state, that he needs the protection

of Mr. Perceval and Mr. Croker and Mr. Richard Ryder and the rest of the men composing the present ministry, and which ministry was left in a minority on the second division that took place in the House of Commons? Is it already come to this?—But, what are we to think of those ministers, those servants of the king, who use his name in this way; who hold him forth to the parliament and the nation, as being under their exclusive protection; as taking shelter under their shield? And who, in so doing, do, in effect, say: “those who do not vote for us *are enemies of the king*?” What are we to think of such ministers?—Yet, this is not only their language, but the language of all their partizans; and, in the case of the recent *election at Oxford*, all those who voted for Lord Grenville were impudently denominated *enemies to the king*! Courtiers have, in all times; the trading courtiers, in all times, have endeavoured to identify themselves with the king, and to make opposition to them pass for disloyalty; but, I do not believe, that this was ever carried to a length any thing approaching that which it has now reached. Of one thing, however, I am quite sure, and that is, that if this doctrine were to be sanctioned by the parliament, the inevitable consequence would be, *the creation of real disloyalty*; for, it would be impossible for human nature to endure an existence under charges so false, so injurious, and so insulting.—MR. PONSOMBY touched upon every part of the subject in a brief way, but in a very masterly one indeed. His speech contains sentiments that will be to be often repeated hereafter, and, therefore, I will insert it, as I find it reported in the Times news-paper.—“He thought that the right hon. gentleman opposite had mis-stated the question, where he said it was a mere question between Friday and Monday—a mere question as to the propriety of waiting a few hours, or deciding immediately. It was no such question: the only question was, whether that house would do its duty, or defer it in compliance to the minister.—(*Hear, hear!*) The minister desired the house to wait for his information! who ever heard of such a request on the part of the accused? (*Hear!*) In courts of justice, if a prisoner was to say to the Judge, “Wait, do not condemn me, wait in compliance to my merit, and you shall hear in time what a famous story I shall

"tell you," who would ever think of
 "paying him attention? (*Hear, hear!*)
 "Why should parliament wait one mo-
 "ment? Why were not the papers on
 "the table the first day of the session?
 "Let the answer which the minister ad-
 "vised the king to make to the Corpora-
 "tion of the City of London be recol-
 "lected. "He did not think it necessary
 "to institute any enquiry into the con-
 "duct of his Commanders by sea or
 "land, *but left it to the wisdom of his par-*
 "*liament to proceed as they thought pro-*
 "*per.*" (*Hear, hear!*) Parliament had
 "now met, and why should it not imme-
 "diately proceed? It was the first time
 "he believed in the history of the country,
 "in which, in times of great national ca-
 "lamity, the house of Commons of Eng-
 "land was desired to wait on the pleasure
 "of the minister! (*Hear, hear!*) The mi-
 "nister said, it would be preposterous to
 "vote inquiry, and then ask for informa-
 "tion: yes, so it would, if the house was
 "to stint itself to the scanty information
 "which he would give it; but it would
 "do no such thing—it would reject his
 "offered and unnecessary information,
 "and in its own wisdom, proceeding on
 "its own grounds, probe the calamity to
 "the bottom. The Minister also said,
 "that the Amendment on the first night
 "went to prejudge the question, and in
 "this also he was mistaken; the Amend-
 "ment only went the length of stating
 "that the Expedition was a great public
 "calamity. Was an Inquiry necessary
 "now to ascertain that? An Inquiry was
 "indeed necessary: not however to as-
 "certain whether the Expedition was
 "a calamity or not, but to ascertain to
 "whom the calamity was imputable.
 "This was the only object of the proposed
 "Inquiry, and condemnation would of
 "course follow the discovery. Condemna-
 "tion of the culprit, whoever he might be,
 "was indeed imperiously demanded.—
 "The enemy has declared (said Mr.
 "Ponsonby) that the Genius of France
 "conducted the British army to perish in
 "the pestilential marshes of Walcheren."
 "No; it was not the Genius of France,
 "but the Demon of England—a weak,
 "divided, distracted, and incapable ad-
 "ministration; ill thought of by all, and
 "suspected by themselves; contemned
 "by the country, and divided against one
 "another; their very leader—he who
 "commanded the finances of the na-
 "tion, declaring himself innocent because

"he was ignorant. Behold the picture of a
 "British Ministry!! (*Hear, hear, hear!*)
 "Why should Buonaparté wage hostility
 "against the country of which such men
 "are the Ministers? What need has he
 "of his great power and talents to cope
 "with their insincerity to themselves, and
 "their incapacity in their offices? (*Hear,*
 "*hear!*) men who were unanimous that
 "their inefficient colleague should be
 "dismissed, yet allowed him to remain
 "in power—allowed him to conduct the
 "greatest Expedition which ever left
 "our coast, on which the eyes of Eng-
 "land were fixed, and the fate of Europe
 "depended—*lest they should hurt his feel-*
 "*ings!* (*Loud cries of hear!*) Men who
 "were content to send our brave soldiers
 "to their grave—content to squander the
 "treasures of the country—content to
 "tarnish our national name, in the hope of
 "finding some colourable pretext for recon-
 "ciling the Noble Lord's feelings to his inca-
 "pacity! Where was their consideration
 "for the honour of their country? Where
 "for the fame of the army? Where for
 "the feelings of the people who had com-
 "mitted such a trust into their hands?
 "(*Hear, hear!*) and yet now is it to be
 "endured, that one of those men should be
 "transferred to the head of the present
 "Administration, and demanding the
 "confidence of that house, desire it to ab-
 "stain from all inquiry into their misfor-
 "tunes, till he should think proper to give
 "it his information. We have indeed ex-
 "perienced many calamities. We have
 "tolerated innumerable sufferings and
 "privations; but if this demand is this
 "night acceded to; if such a minister ob-
 "tains the confidence of this house, then
 "malignant men enough may be found in
 "the nation, to pronounce its greatest ca-
 "lamity—SUCH A HOUSE OF COM-
 "MONS!"—Oh! malignant men! And,
 "why not very good-natured and very honest
 "men, Sir? Why, the fact is, Sir, that,
 "it is, as you well know, and as not a man
 "of you can or will deny it is, Sir, *owing*
 "*to the House of Commons*; owing wholly
 "to the House of Commons, that this mi-
 "nistry has ever been in power, and, of
 "course, that they have done what you and
 "your colleagues charge them with having
 "done. Why, then, Sir, talk of malignant
 "men? Why call those men malignant, who
 "think, that such a House of Commons is
 "the nation's greatest calamity?—How
 "does the case stand? Why, you tell us,
 "that these ministers have squandered the



treasure of the country; that they have uselessly sacrificed the lives of thousands of brave men; that they have sent our soldiers to their grave, content to squander the treasure of the people, content to tarnish our national name, in the *hope* of finding some pretext for turning out Lord Castlereagh. You tell us, that they are a weak, divided, distracted set of men; ill-thought of by all, and suspected by themselves; condemned by the country and divided against one another; their very leader declaring himself innocent only because he is ignorant. You tell us, in so many words, that they are "*the Demon of England*." Now, Sir, if this be true, and if the House of Commons still keep these men in power, would those men be "*malignant*," who should pronounce "*such a House of Commons*" to be the nation's greatest calamity? Would none but "*malignant*" men entertain such an opinion? Would it require *malignity* to pronounce to be the nation's greatest calamity, that which should support "*the Demon of England*?" That which alone should be found able and willing to prolong the existence of that, which you have represented to be the greatest curse that ever befel any nation?—You should, Sir, it appears to me, have said, with the *Edinburgh Reviewers*, that, if parliament does not now do what it ought; that if it supports, or "*stands by*," what you call "*the Demon of England*," you will give your voice for a *reform of that parliament*. It appears to me, Sir, that there is no getting out of this. These men are ministers in consequence of the support of the House of Commons; that support has enabled them to do all those things which induces you to call them "*the Demon of England*;" and, if, after this, the House still supports them, by voting them innocent, or by voting that there is no need for trying them, one of two things must be; either that your description of the ministers is incorrect, or, that the House of Commons, as now constituted, is the nation's very greatest calamity, and, of course, that any one may call it so, without being chargeable with "*malignity*."

—SIR FRANCIS BURDETT, on the bringing up the Report of the Address, in answer to the Speech, took the real solid ground. He ascribed all our calamities and disgraces to the state of the House of Commons. He took a view of the shocking transactions which had occurred since the House last met; "and yet," says he,

"we see just the same sort of majorities as usual." Yes, just the same sort, and just the same in amount, as if there had been no murderous expeditions, and no pistolling ministers. There is no one who has the impudence to deny, that *the people* of this country feel indignant at what has taken place; that the whole *nation* participates in the feelings expressed by the city of London; yet, there was, in the House of Commons a decided majority against a vote of censure.—MR. PONSONBY has told us, that the present ministry is "*the Demon of England*;" he has told us, that they suffered Lord Castlereagh to send our army to perish in Holland that they might have a pretext for getting him out of his place. This is, in plain English, what Mr. Ponsonby has told us. Well, then, *what must that assembly be, who shall be found to support such ministers?*—There is no getting out of this. The house will *punish* the ministers, or it will not. I say *punish*, because the mere putting them out of their places is no satisfaction of justice, supposing them to be guilty; it is not answering the ends of *responsibility*. Well, then, the House will punish them, or it will not. If it does punish them according to the magnitude of the charge which Mr. Ponsonby has preferred against them, why, then, one may yet have hopes of better days, even without a reform of Parliament; but, if it does not punish them according to the magnitude of their alledged crimes; nay, if it does not punish them at all; still more, if it does not put them out; aye, if it still supports them, declares them worthy of its confidence, and again heaps the treasure of the nation into their hands; again commits the treasure, the honour, the life-blood of the nation to the disposal of "*the Demon of England*;" if it does this, what will the people say? Why, they must say one of two things; either that the House *ought instantly to be reformed*, or that Mr. Ponsonby's description of the ministry is *not true*.—Before I quit this subject, I must notice a passage in Mr. CHARLES YORKE's answer to SIR FRANCIS BURDETT, on the 25th. This was a most curious answer to be sure. Never was there, I believe, *such an answer to such a speech*. The passage I have alluded to was this: "The hon. Baronet had stated that this country was "*in great danger*. He agreed with him "*as to the danger*, but not as to his means "*of extricating us from it*; for if they "*should be adopted*, the country he feared, "*would be ruined*. He did not think the

"great danger of the country was from a foreign enemy, but that it arose and was engendered much nearer home. He saw it most formidable in the dissensions existing among ourselves, and from a prevalence of opinions uttered in that House, and spread all around to make us hate one another (Hear, hear!) The exaggerated manner in which opinions were uttered in that house, gave an opportunity to persons disaffected to the government to act under their authority, and to turn them to the most mischievous purposes; and every expression tending to lessen the government in the opinion of the people was greatly to be deprecated."—This is Mr. Yorke's old doctrine. He, upon the first motion relative to the Duke of York's affair, discovered, that there was a "*Jacobinical Conspiracy against the house of Brunswick*;" and now he can see no danger from a foreign enemy; the fleet and arsenals in the Scheldt and all the other mighty means of the greatest conqueror that the world ever saw; all these appear to excite no terror in the staid and settled mind of Mr. Yorke, who can see no danger but that which arises from the little liberty of the press, which is yet in existence. He says, that our danger arises from members of parliament expressing opinions, which give a sanction to persons DISAFFECTED TO THE GOVERNMENT, to circulate such opinions, and to turn them to the most mischievous purposes. So, then, Mr. Yorke knows, it seems, of "*persons disaffected to the government*?" Why did he not name them? And he knows of these, too, at the same time that he tells Sir Francis, that *never was there so unanimous a feeling and expression of loyalty as at the time of the t'other-day jubilee*. Well, then, if this was so, these "*persons disaffected to the government*" cannot be very numerous; and, yet, it seems, that Mr. Yorke thinks them more formidable than any foreign enemy, though the king, in the Speech, does think it worth while to tell the parliament, that "to guard his dominions against his inveterate enemy will require the utmost efforts of vigilance, fortitude, and perseverance." Yet Mr. Yorke sees no danger from "a foreign enemy;" he sees no danger but from "persons disaffected to the government," in the midst of a nation full of loyalty!—He saw our danger most formidable in the dissensions existing amongst ourselves, and from a prevalence of opinions uttered

"in that House, and spread all around to make us hate one another." Why, there is, indeed, some truth in this; and, I suppose that these assertions of Mr. Yorke about "*persons disaffected to the government*," are intended to work in the way of conciliation, and to make us LOVE one another! I said, at the time when it was first asserted, that Canning and Castlereagh had been pistolling one another; I said, then, that I wondered, that the Jacobins were not accused of being the cause of it. —What I should have asked of Mr. Yorke, however, had I been in the House, is this: "*Who are the persons, disaffected to the government?*" I would have had an answer to this; for, if there be such persons, they ought to be pointed out by name; and, if there be none such, it is doing the nation flagrant injustice to say that there are; besides giving great encouragement to the enemy. —Certain minds appear to be formed for the brooding over and the hatching of suspicions; for the imagining of the existence of conspiracies and treasons; and, though the intention may be void of malice, as in the case of Mr. Yorke I am convinced it is, yet, it requires but a very little of sober reflection to make one perceive, that, to give way to the spreading around of such suspicions must produce implacable resentments; for, there is, perhaps, nothing so galling as false accusations of any sort, and particularly of this sort, which have, it is notorious, in various instances, created that very disaffection, which they falsely alledged to be already in existence. —III. The Motion of LORD COCHRANE, relative to Lord Gambier's Court Martial, and which motion was made on the 29th of January, was "*for the MINUTES of the Evidence of that Court Martial to be laid before the House*," in order that the House might, previously to voting thanks to Lord Gambier for his exploits in and near Basque Roads, see whether he deserved any thanks. —I shall here insert Lord Cochrane's Speech, as I find it in the STATESMAN news-paper. "Lord Cochrane in a speech of some length, entered into a detail of the circumstances attending the attack on the enemy's fleet in the Basque Roads. Lord Gambier had neglected his signals, and failed to support him in a full and efficient manner. The object in view, the destruction of the enemy's fleet, he thought not sufficiently accomplished, when more might have been done. According to his

own account, Lord Gambier had delayed to support him for more than four hours; but according to his (Lord C.'s), he had done so for more than six, and when at last he took up that position which it would have been advisable for him to have taken earlier, the enemy's ships were out of our reach. *He pledged himself by all that was valuable to him as a man, to prove that the conduct of the Court Martial on Lord Gambier's trial, was such as they ought to blush for.* He contended, that to give the thanks of the House to an Officer, who had been tried for his life, who had not gone in to the enemy, but *who had been out of sight during the whole action*, would be doing that for which no precedent could be found. He called upon the House to insist on the production of the Minutes of the trial. Those produced, *he pledged himself to show, that the Court Martial had proved itself partial in a manner unworthy of a Court of Law.* He would prove that the Charge and the Evidence were contrary to law; *that contradictions had been given on oath by the same evidence; yet they were admitted by the Judge Advocate.* The House ought to be on their guard against giving into motions of that sort, as by those means Government might screen themselves from merited reprobation, and gain for a man whose parliamentary influence they wanted, the highest honours they could bestow, however unworthy the object. It would screen themselves from the censure they deserved, for appointing an officer to a station the duties of which he was incompetent to discharge. If he did not prove all he had undertaken to prove, when they acceded to his motion, *he would resign the honours his Majesty had bestowed upon him, and consign himself to the contempt and obloquy he should in that case deserve.* He wished Ministers would give such a pledge to prove their statements."—Now, it appears to me, that even the friends of Lord Gambier should, after hearing this speech, from such a person, have joined in the call for the Minutes.—MR. PERCEVAL moved an amendment, that is to say, he moved to put the word *Sentence*, instead of the word *Minutes*! Let us have his speech, however, from the same paper; and then we shall have both sides. "The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER did not rise exactly to oppose, but to amend the motion. That House was the only tribunal competent

to decide on the policy of the Expedition to the Scheldt; but that case differed materially from the present. If the Minutes of the trial were to be produced, it must be to review the conduct of the Court, and not to revise the sentence. Lord Gambier had been accused, and had been honourably acquitted. What now did the Noble Lord do? He advanced similar charges. But could the House technically follow him, so as to reverse the opinion of the Admirals and Captains composing the Court-Martial? The Noble Lord had asserted that the House should be careful how they acceded to motions of thanks, as Government, to strengthen themselves, would unduly compliment a man who had Parliamentary influence. He never heard of any such influence possessed by Lord Gambier. The reflection thrown on the First Lord of the Admiralty was unjust. Nothing can place the integrity of his conduct in a more luminous view, than the appointment of the Noble Lord to the command assigned to him under Lord Gambier. It was a wise choice; the Noble Lord had well justified it; although *there certainly were others, who would have been equally successful in the enterprize.* It was, therefore, an unhappy remark, to allude to that Noble Lord in the manner that the Noble Lord opposite had done. The Noble Lord had asserted that there was no prosecutor. Why? Why did not the Noble Lord assume that character? Instead of preferring a direct charge against Lord Gambier, he only threw out insinuations which compelled that Noble Lord himself to demand a Court-Martial. Upon the whole he thought the production of the sentence alone would be sufficient in the present instance, and he should therefore move as an amendment to substitute the word "*Sentence*" for the word "*Minutes*" in the Noble Lord's motion." SIR FRANCIS BURDETT said in answer to Mr. Perceval, "that the preceding speakers had saved him the trouble of proving the right of the House to interfere with the sentence of a Court-Martial. The question therefore now related to the propriety of such an interference in the present case. If to prove the propriety of such an interference he would wish to cite an extreme case, it would be the present, in which an Officer of the character of his Noble Friend came forward and pledged

" himself to prove the strong facts which
 " he had so distinctly stated; facts which
 " required the most serious consideration.
 " The production of the Sentence alone
 " would be most insufficient. Of the
 " Sentence his Noble Friend complained,
 " and was prepared to shew that it bore
 " on its face marks of the greatest
 " inconsistency. There were circum-
 " stances connected with it, which
 " common sense, ignorant of tactics,
 " would pronounce contradictory. His
 " noble friend had been taunted for not
 " becoming a prosecutor. His noble friend
 " might not think guilt attached to Lord
 " Gambier's conduct, although it might
 " not deserve the thanks of that House.
 " It therefore appeared to him that his
 " noble friend kindly wished to keep Lord
 " Gambier's behaviour from discussion.
 " Lord Gambier admitted that there had
 " been a lapse of time, a delay he had
 " been charged with by his noble friend.
 " If there were any difference, the expres-
 " sion of Lord Gambier was the most
 " pointed. There was an old proverb—
 " 'Time and tide will wait for no man;'—
 " but Lord Gambier seemed to think that
 " both would stay for him. The signal
 " of his noble friend ought not to have
 " been disregarded. Had Nelson been as
 " desirous of preserving his fleet as Lord
 " Gambier, should we have had to boast
 " of the glorious victories of the Nile and
 " Trafalgar, in which he sacrificed the life
 " that had been so useful to his country?
 " The admiral of a fleet should have
 " greater objects in view than the preser-
 " vation of his ships. More might have
 " been done. His noble friend was the
 " person who achieved the enterprize,
 " and why should Lord Gambier be
 " thanked for it? Indeed ministers them-
 " selves tacitly acknowledged this fact,
 " when they advised his majesty to give
 " his noble friend the Red Riband. If
 " the motion before the House should be
 " acceded to, his noble friend would be
 " ignominiously stripped of his honours;
 " a disgrace which he had not deserved.
 " Ministers would pass sentence on them-
 " selves in admitting that Lord Gambier
 " did right in disregarding the signals of
 " his noble friend. If he were not worthy
 " of being attended to, why did they send
 " him out on such an enterprize? Could
 " the shoals and batteries cause a greater
 " delay, or threaten greater danger in the
 " morning than in the afternoon? When
 " the enemy became less accessible it

" seemed we could approach. He con-
 " cluded, by declaring his firm opinion,
 " that his noble friend was entitled to have
 " been supported by the noble Lord whose
 " conduct was the object of the present
 " motion."——MR. YORKE said, that
 he was sorry Lord Cochrane had proceeded
 as he had done; that he had *never com-
 manded a ship of the line*; that he was
 but a *young officer*, and though he thought
 highly of his spirit and bravery, he thought
 it *not a little presumptuous* in him to set up
 his judgment against that of captain Stop-
 ford and others, who were *captains before
 he was born*; and that *he thought the Admi-
 ralty much to blame for appointing the noble
 lord to the command of the attack in Basque
 Roads*.——This last sentiment was re-
 peated by several other persons during
 the debate; nor, indeed, is it any thing
 more than what was conveyed in that part
 of Lord Gambier's dispatch, where he says,
 that several of the officers, already under
 him, *would have done the thing as well as Lord
 Cochrane*, or words to that effect; and,
 upon which the public, with voice unani-
 mous, asked this question: "Why did
 not they do it then, and why did you not
 propose the enterprize?" As to the
 choice of Lord Cochrane, there was little
 room for choice; for, as I have always un-
 derstood to be the case, Lord Cochrane,
 in coming home from the Mediterranean,
 took a look into Basque Roads, saw the
 situation of the French fleet, hastened up
 to London the moment he reached the
 land, told the Admiralty what he had seen,
 and offered his services in burning the
 enemy's fleet. Now, if this was so, the
 Admiralty really had no choice; or, at
 least, no other choice than that of rejecting
 the proposal or of employing the person
 who made it. Lord Gambier might be
 right; several of his captains *might*, for
 aught I know, have done as much as Lord
 Cochrane did; but, this we all know, that
 they had lain off Basque Roads for a long
 time, and *that they did not do any thing of
 the sort*. Lord Cochrane, if my informa-
 tion be correct, was the *originator* of the
 enterprize; it was he who first saw the
 practicability of burning the enemy's
 fleet; it was he who proposed it; it was
 he who planned the attack; it was he who
 indicated the means; and, would not the
 Admiralty have been guilty of shameful
 neglect of their duty, if they had not em-
 ployed him to execute the plan?——His
 youth! Well Mr. Yorke, this is very good,
 after all that we have heard, and all that

we know, about the *age of Colonels of regiments!* But, his youth! Why, my Lord Cochrane, though only *thirty*, perhaps, and though he has never commanded a *ship of the line*, has, perhaps, had *more experience*, has had more real experience, more *active* experience, than almost any man in the navy. And, then, are his signal intrepidity and still more signal skill and resource of mind; are these to pass for nothing; and is such a man to be stiled "presumptuous," because he sets up his judgment against that of a man, "who was a *Captain before he was born?*" Age, in such cases, is not to be reckoned by the number of days that a man has moved upon earth, but by the strength and extent of mind, with which nature has blessed him; and, without disparagement to any man, I have no hesitation to say, that my Lord Cochrane possesses these qualities in a degree that falls to the lot of but very few men indeed; and, of this opinion, the country, judging of him by his deeds, decidedly is with respect to this distinguished officer. He has, besides, so much enthusiasm in the cause of his country; such an ardent zeal in all he undertakes; he has been so wedded to his noble profession; he is so completely disinterested; he has a soul so devoted to the fame of his country; that though I doubt not that there *may* be others equal to him in these respects, yet I am warranted in believing, that his equals are rarely to be found. His mind is stored with *all* the knowledge, various as it is, that his profession demands, or that can be useful in it; and to this is added an astonishing perseverance, a never ceasing attention, an activity almost beyond belief. Those who have witnessed his conduct in the performance of his duty, speak of him in strains of encomium truly romantic. And, is such a man to be told, that his judgment is not to be set up against those, who have *seen more years* than himself? How would Mr. Yorke have relished this, if offered against Mr. Pitt, when he became *prime minister* at the age of *twenty two*.—The general objection to my Lord Cochrane's motion appears to have been, that to call for the Minutes would seem to impeach the integrity of the court-martial; and, indeed, so it would. But, *why* were the Minutes called for? Not with a view of discrediting the decision of the Court-Martial; but with a view of shewing, that, though *acquitted*, Lord Gambier was, from what transpired at the Court-Martial, un-

worthy of the thanks of the House of Commons. Therefore, all the danger that was apprehended from a precedent of overhauling the proceedings of a Court-Martial was imaginary, as it never could be applicable to any case, wherein it was not proposed to give the thanks of that House to a person, who had been accused of neglect of the duty for which he was about to be thanked, and who had been tried for his life upon that accusation.—

Upon a division, there were 19, who voted for Lord Cochrane's motion, and 171, who voted against it; but, before this division took place, Lord Cochrane stated, "That, in consequence of some conversation which had occurred with some Members of the Admiralty Board, it had been known that he would resist the Vote of Thanks. He had then received the letter which had been already noticed in the debate. His answer to it was—that one which ought to have been given; he entered into no personal statement; he simply referred to his log-book. There was no trick, no evasion, in that reference. The log-book contained all the documents that were applicable, or ought to be brought forward. It had been asserted, that he ought to have come forward to prosecute; that he ought to have made his charge boldly, and thrown himself before the country as the author of the charge. But he was not to be dictated to; he felt the seriousness of the effect, if urged by him; he knew the responsibility which it would draw down; he thought of admiral Byng.—[Here the noble lord entered into a series of observations on the nature of the manoeuvres in Basque Roads, but in a tone so low, as to be unintelligible in the gallery.]—He proceeded to say, that he had imposed a great duty and a great hazard on himself; but he felt himself adequate to both. His own character was involved. His conduct had even been impeached; but he was willing to suffer all things, the extreme of contempt and scorn, expulsion from that house, and infamy through the world, if he did not substantiate the facts, which he was then pledged to lay before them. Evidence had been brought to disprove his testimony; he had wished to disprove that evidence; but permission had been refused him."—After this Mr. Perceval moved a *Vote of Thanks* to Lord Gambier, which was opposed by Lord Coch-

rane, Sir Francis Burdett, and Mr. Windham. SIR FRANCIS required to know "whether the service of Lord Gambier was thankworthy, admitting it to have all the value that could be attributed to it, by any thing but the unblushing and profuse spirit of ministerial favouritism. But, on the other hand, there was the full and decided testimony of a man adequate to give his judgment, and of whose admirable valour and good fortune the house and the nation had but one opinion. He felt that in making those remarks, he might be treading on perilous ground. He was probably bringing upon himself some charitable remarks, particularly those of a gentleman, whose charity was of a very peculiar nature. But he was careless about such remarks; he deprecated that person's charity; he would not shun, he would rather solicit his hostility. Had there been any thing said to make out a reason for the vote which was demanded of them on that night? Where was the evidence of intrepidity or skill, of that boldness which bursts its way through all obstacles; of that genius before which obstacles vanish? For all this he was only insulted with a dry catalogue of negatives, and an account that the noble admiral inspected the action at a distance of seven miles. The question had been treated lightly; but levity was unbecoming the grave and sage matters of their deliberation. The subject was of the utmost importance; and it merited to be most seriously considered."—And MR. WINDHAM, though he disapproved of the motion for the Minutes, said: "that the Thanks of that House did not deserve to be lavished on any man, unless his service was of that rank which forced itself into universal report, and universal admiration. It was not to be evolved in some obscure process of official chemistry; not to be drawn out from under bundles of obscure records; not to be elicited by any *keen, cunning, recondite, subtilizing process, beyond the practice or the perception of the General.* To be praised, it must be known to be matter of thanks, it must be matter of publicity."—Here the question of thanks was put to the vote, when there appeared for the motion 161; against it 39.—So that my Lord Gambier has his thanks, for which so long and so tough a fight has been kept up.—Let him take them, then and much good may they do him.—At

present I shall say no more upon this subject, than to point out to my readers a work just published, entitled, "*Notes on the Minutes of a Court Martial, holden on board his Majesty's Ship the Gladiator, at Portsmouth, in July, 1809, on the Trial of LORD GAMBIER;*" which work contains illustrative charts, relative to the operations in Basque Roads.

If I have room, I shall insert, in the present sheet, correct reports of Lord Cochrane's Speech, and also of his lordship's Reply. They deserve the serious attention of every man in the kingdom.

Want of room compels me to postpone an account of MR. MANNING's Complaint about the News-papers; and also some remarks, which I meant to submit to my readers, upon the treatment of MR. FINNERTY by Lord Castlereagh, or some one in power. That Gentleman's Letter has appeared in the STATESMAN news-paper, and a very great impression it has made upon all those who have read it. I hope, that this affair will lead to some inquiry; for it is of great public importance. Mr. Finnerty was invited to go to Walcheren, as I heard, at the time, by SIR HOME POPHAM, and, no doubt with the laudable view of his talents (than whom few men possess more) being used in the giving an account of what passed. Why, then, was he not suffered to remain? And, at any rate, what just grounds could there be for hunting him through the fleet, as if he had been a malefactor? His Letter does him infinite honour; and, I trust, that we are yet to have an account of the Expedition from his pen.

WM. COBBETT.

Botley, 1st Feb. 1810.

COBBETT'S Parliamentary Debates:

The Twelfth, Thirteenth, and Fourteenth Volumes of the above Work, comprising the Proceedings in both Houses of Parliament during the last Session, are ready for delivery. Complete sets from the Commencement in the Year 1803, may still be had of the Publishers.

* * * All Communications for the Parliamentary Debates will be carefully attended to; but it is particularly requested that they may be transmitted to the Publishers with the least possible delay.

LORD GAMBIER.

Lord COCHRANE's Speech in the House of Commons, Monday, January 29, 1810.

Sir; Painful as it is, to present myself to the attention of this House, on the present occasion; yet a duty which I owe to my Country, demands the sacrifice of my feelings. It is incumbent on me that I should submit to this House, the reasons on which I found the Motion of which I have given notice, for the Minutes of the Court Martial, held on Lord Gambier: a document which his Majesty's Ministers, on a former night, did not seem inclined to grant; although absolutely necessary in order that it might be minutely inspected, by every member, so as to be enabled fairly, and impartially to decide, whether the thanks, now in the contemplation of his Majesty's Ministers, are due to Lord Gambier, for the part he took, in what has been denominated, by them, a Victory in Basque Roads. But, as if it were unnecessary that we should judge for ourselves, it has been asserted, by the right honourable the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the merits of this case have been already decided on: that the Court Martial held on the Noble Lord, has already proclaimed his honourable acquittal; and the zeal, ability, and anxiety he manifested for the welfare of his Majesty's service. But were all this true, Sir, and if it were possible that all those facts could be ascertained, by the mere inspection of the copy of a Sentence; still I contend, that the combination would not entitle an Officer to the Thanks of this House—the proudest honor that it is in our power to bestow. We have, Sir, a right, and ought to judge for ourselves, and this we can only do, by carefully examining the Minutes of the Court Martial, before which the Noble Lord was tried on a very serious charge: a charge not brought against him by an individual; but by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, and grounded on official documents. Upon such documents, Sir, their Lordships founded the charge “of neglect, or delay in taking effectual means to destroy the enemy;” and we cannot suppose, that their Lordships brought it without due consideration. However this may be; I submit to the House, that zeal, ability, and anxiety for the welfare of his Majesty's service, and having done nothing wrong, do

not entitle any Officer to our Thanks, which, if bestowed on trifling, or indeed any occasion, except when marked by brilliant achievement, will dwindle into utter contempt, even with those on whom they should be conferred. They are already held lightly in the estimation of the Navy, and such I freely confess is my feeling respecting them. I therefore entreat this House, to weigh the matter well before they come to a decision, and to consider what they are about, and the consequences of voting indiscriminately and blindfolded, that which was, formerly, bestowed exclusively on those, who were publicly known to have rendered the highest services to the state. The House ought to be on their guard against giving way to motions, that have such objects: as by such means, Ministers might screen themselves from reprobation; and gain for a man, whose parliamentary influence they required, the highest honours they could render, however unworthy the object.—I contend that to give the Thanks of the House to an Officer who has been tried on heavy charges, who instead of going into action, continued at a distance not less than seven miles during the whole time, would be doing that for which no precedent could be found. I am clearly of opinion, that the Minutes of the Court Martial, which I am about to move for, are indispensably requisite; not with a view to reconsider the decision of the Court; but to give foundation to our opinion respecting a matter on which we are not only entitled, but bound to decide justly; and on which the Court Martial could not decide for us. Indeed, Sir, even in Lord Gambier's written defence, we might find his Lordship's pretension to our Thanks, which would be some satisfaction; for in the Sentence pronounced by the Court, and offered as a ground, on which to rest our judgment, I protest I can find no claim. I shall go farther, Sir, and, though it is not the object to criminate by the production of their Minutes; yet, Sir, I shall boldly assert, that the charge of delay will be found, not only to have been proved, by the witnesses produced; but admitted also by his Lordship's written defence; a delay of four hours elapsed, by the Noble Lord's own account, even before he took up the position, which he has stated to be the best, for observing the motions of the enemy, and for sending ships to the attack, and five hours afterwards elapsed before any attack was made,

which is in direct opposition to the Sentence delivered by the Court;—if a Court it can be called, when it appeared so extraordinary that the President could not give it a name, as he always spoke of it ambiguously; thus, “what may be termed,” or, “what may be called “the prosecution.” Not only do I assert, Sir, that the charge has been admitted by his Lordship, and proved by witnesses; but his Lordship’s written defence, also, will be found to contradict itself in points, on which the charge hinged, and in others of material import: that his Lordship’s Official Letters contradict that defence, and each other; and that many of the witnesses falsify their own evidence in substantive facts, and contradict themselves when deposing only to the best of their knowledge. In other instances they swear positively to things, of the truth of which they had no knowledge. Which I believe is an offence against the law. The fabricated chart, Sir, will then also come under review: that chart produced by the Master of the *Caledonia*, to the Court, in order to explain the various positions of the British and French Fleets, “on and previous to the 12th of April,” for the purpose of inducing the members, assembled on, “what may be called,” the Trial of Lord Gambier, to believe, that no more of the French ships could have been destroyed than were destroyed, had the British force been sent in at an earlier period; although the fabricator of that chart, after having, on his first examination, sworn that it was a chart of the 12th, swears afterwards that it was meant for the 13th, inasmuch as that “the only vessels marked on the chart for the 12th, were those that had been destroyed;”—those, Sir, that did not exist.—I have one word more to say, respecting the falsity of this vile fabrication, which the master of the *Caledonia* professes to have copied from the *Neptune François*. The distance between the shoals are contracted to little more than one-third of the size of the *Neptune*, from which, as I have already remarked, it is declared to have been taken: in order to shew (for there can be no other reason) that the space for anchorage, as deposed by the Masters, without knowledge of the fact, was confined; the water round it shoal, and the passage narrow; and that the British ships must have been within point blank range, “not only of the destructive broadsides of the two ships afloat,

but of the upright ones on shore, and of the tremendous batteries of Aix, which, separately or united,” according to the testimony given, in support of the assertions of Lord Gambier, must have demolished every vessel, “locked up in so confined an anchorage.” Though at the same time, and for the safety, I suppose, of his Majesty’s ships, that might have been sent in, in defiance of “such unwarrantable peril,” the vessels aground are removed, by the contriver of the chart, from “the NW part of the *Pallés Shoal*, the NW part nearest the deep water flanking the passage,” where, he had sworn, they were situated, and which was the fact, to the SE side of the shoal, farthest from the deep water, and beyond the *Tonnère*, which was not within range; and “where they never could have been approached by our ships for the shot to reach them.” This, Sir, is not all: by Stokes’s deposition the *Cassard*, one of the ships that would have raked us with such terrible effect, is stated, and in truth it was so, to have been about one-third of a mile from Aix, and the *Foudroyant*, another of them, about three cables length from her; but, Mr. Stokes, in his chart, has cunningly put them in a corner, between two shoals, and close to both, where, he has sworn, they could not be got at, though he had positively sworn, first that they could have annoyed us, and next that he did not know the distance between the shoals. I have already asserted, Sir, that contradictions of facts, on which the Charge was founded, are frequent in the Defence of Lord Gambier; but I have yet to tell this House, that these contradictions, in substantive facts, are, in several, nay, many instances, confirmed, sometimes one way, and sometimes in another, by the same individual witnesses, examined in behalf of “what may be termed” the Defence.—For instance: by some of those witnesses it is said, that the *Cassard*, *Foudroyant*, and some of the grounded ships, would have fired with complete effect on the British ships, had they been sent earlier to attack them; and, again, that we never could have got near them for the shot to reach—Assertions that are, in the nature of things, incompatible; as in positive contradiction to each other, and given in support of Lord Gambier’s statements, that three out of the seven ships aground on the *Pallés* were never within reach of any of the fleet that might have been sent in to attack them; and, that the other four of

the eleven were never in a situation to be assailed, after the fire-ships failed in their main object; although at another time the noble lord declared, that some of those very ships would have raked our ships had they been sent in earlier than they were. I therefore call on the House to insist on the production of the Minutes of the Trial, and I pledge myself to prove, to the conviction of this House, and to my Country, all that I have asserted. I will also prove partiality on the part of the Court, and illegal and unjust conduct on the part of the Judge Advocate, who admitted, and even courted, evidence on one side, which he rejected on the other; and urged inquiry into the conduct of officers, whose conduct the Court were not empowered to investigate, in order that he might, by insinuations, (for there could be no other motive), create an unmerited prejudice against me, by shewing that their conduct had been arraigned by me, and so induce them to unite against me, and make common cause with the Commander in Chief, who had stepped forward, as he insinuated, to vindicate their injured characters, and examined his secretary on the subject. One instance may, of the many which I could adduce, well suffice, in relation to the conduct of the learned Judge Advocate: Asked, on a certain occasion by the President, "Is that evidence?" he answered, I should think it is. And, why, Sir, did he think so? "because it was to affect the evidence of Lord Cochrane; in that point of view he thought it was legal evidence," although I had not even touched on the subject then under consideration. As to the Court, their conduct is too glaring to admit of a doubt, as to the motives by which they were actuated. Conversations between officers, and questions framed upon matter arising out of such conversations: were admitted, notwithstanding, Sir, my testimony had been refused, in an instance, wherein I merely stated, that the opinion I had at the moment delivered to the Court, had formerly been given in the presence of certain officers, and Sir, I submit to you, and to the learned gentlemen in this house, that such reference was admissible, as it was to establish that, by having said at a former time what I then stated, I was consistent with myself. The Judge Advocate pursued the same course, he received documents as evidence, which could not be authenticated, and on the other side, rejected those that could. Amongst the lat-

ter, was captain Woolf's order to supersede me in the inner anchorage; though the secretary who wrote it, and captain Woolf who received it, were witnesses before the Court; but, had that paper been established, I will tell you, Sir, what it would have proved; it would have proved, that it had been written together with Lord Gambier's two letters of recall, on the 13th, although the signal, to the same effect, had been attempted to be denied, and witnesses examined to support assertion against his acts. I shall not detain the house longer, than to pledge myself by every thing that is valuable to man, if these Minutes are granted, to prove, though that is not immediately the intention of calling for them, not only that injustice and partiality on the part of the Court has been exercised towards me, not only that the Judge Advocate, the expounder of the law, pointed his decisions from the course of justice; but, Sir, that the defence is contradicted by itself, contradicted by his Lordship's official letters, and by his own witnesses, many of whom, as to substantive facts, are at variance with themselves and each other; and lastly, that the Chart of the positions of the enemy's ships on the 12th of April, a most material point, is false, and in every respect a foul fabrication. This, and all that I have said, I pledge myself to prove to the conviction of the world, if the Minutes of the Court are laid before this house. Or, if I fail, then, Sir, let contempt and merited infamy follow me; then Sir, unworthy of the honour, which his majesty was graciously pleased to confer upon me, I shall resign it back into his hands, and vacate my seat in this house. I do not desire to get off with nominal responsibility, and I wish his majesty's ministers could give such a pledge for their actions and for their statements.—I now move, Sir, That there be laid before this house, a copy of the Minutes of the Trial of Admiral Lord Gambier, held on board his Majesty's ship the *Gladiator*, in Portsmouth harbour, on the 23rd of July 1809. Also the original Minutes taken day by day by the Deputy Judge Advocate.

Lord COCHRANE's Reply.

Sir;—Some remarks that have fallen from gentlemen on both sides of the house, call upon me for explanation.—And first, the honourable gentleman below me, has asserted, that it was my bounden duty to have brought forward, myself, charges against Lord Gambier, if I thought his con-

doct censurable.—I must tell that honourable gentleman, that, I adopted the mode that under such circumstances, it was my duty to adopt. I did not presume to frame Charges founded on my own opinion, of the transactions that had passed in Basque roads.—I did not deliver Charges: but when I found that a Vote of Thanks, was to be pressed on this House, I felt myself called upon to refer their lordships to the log books and minutes of signals, where they would find reasons, why a Vote of Thanks should not be granted to the Commander in Chief, and their lordships found them, in these official documents, which are received, as evidence, in all courts of law. These, Sir, I had no power to falsify, and to these I referred, not with a wish maliciously to criminate, but to save this House and my country, from what I felt would be a disgrace. As this book has been used (Gurney's Minutes) I shall if permitted read the opinion of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, founded, I suppose, on mature deliberation. "And whereas by the log books and minutes of signals of the Caledonia, Imperieuse, and other ships employed on that service, it appears to us, that the said admiral Lord Gambier, on the 12th day of the said month of April, the enemy's ships being then on shore, and the signal having been made that they could be destroyed, did, for a considerable time, neglect or delay taking effectual measures for destroying them: We, therefore, in compliance with his lordship's request, and in consequence of what appears in the said log books and minutes of signals, think fit that a Court Martial shall be assembled for the purpose of examining into his lordship's conduct, and trying him for the same:" Such was the Charge brought against his lordship by the Board of Admiralty after investigating the log books of the Caledonia and of the fleet. No individual had the power to mislead their lordships; and this I submit to the House was the fair and honourable mode to proceed. It was regular, and not liable to be affected by prejudice, or my opinions.—I had another reason for this line of conduct, I did not chuse to oppress my mind with responsibility; I believe, admiral Byng was called to an account not by an individual but by his country. I trust, Sir, this explanation will be satisfactory to the House, and to the honourable gentleman who chose

to reprobate my conduct. I have now a word or two to say to the naval member opposite, who has spoken of forming logs for the purpose of evidence. When he throws out insinuation or rather accusations such as these, it would be but honourable in him, and justice demands that he should state the difference, which was detected in these logs. Lord Gambier, who was pretty much alive to detect errors, did point out, "that in one, the signal made, was that half the fleet could destroy the enemy, and in the other, that it stood, "part of the fleet can destroy the enemy." What, Sir, is the mighty difference between part and the half, a part may be either more or less or exactly the half of the fleet. Is this the error which the honourable gentleman has spoken of, or is it the circumstance of my hailing the Indefatigable which is not noticed in one, but inserted in the other. That, Sir, was a personal act of my own; the words spoken had nothing to do with the transactions usually inserted in the log books of ships. Those who were on board can vouch for the correctness of the fact. As to the chart, I must address a few words more, to the same gentleman, and state to this House, and pledge myself to prove if the minutes are granted, that my chart is correct and is corroborated, as to every point for which it was produced, by the testimony of the Master of the Caledonia, who, after falsifying his own chart, swears, that the French ships lay, exactly, as I placed them. And here, Sir, I shall give a specimen of the evidence of those ingenious Gentlemen, the inventors of the fabricated chart, which was introduced, for three reasons, to shew the confined state of the anchorage, the point blank shot of the batteries of Aix, and that no more of the enemy's ships could have been got at, than those that were destroyed. In all these points, I pledge myself to prove the chart produced by the Master of the Caledonia, false, by the mouths of its fabricators themselves, and here is their evidence. First, as to the space in the anchorage. Mr. Fairfax, on being asked. Is it much confined and the waters round it shoal?—A. The space is much confined. I have not sounded myself there.—2. Is the navigation of Aix roads difficult for large ships as far as you know?—A. Very much so.

(To be continued.)